Campaign Fund Is Confirmed

By Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein
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Clark MacGregor, President's Nixon's campaign manager, confirmed yesterday that the President's re-election committee maintained a cash "fund" from which top Nixon aides were authorized to make withdrawals.

In a taping of a television interview with Elizabeth Drew, shown last night, MacGregor also for the first time listed five of the persons who authorized or received payments from the fund. He said no money from the fund was used for illegal purposes.

The five named by MacGregor are: John N. Mitchell, the former Attorney General who was the Nixon campaign manager until July 1; Maurice H. Stans, the former Secretary of Commerce who is the chief Nixon fund raiser; Jeb Stuart Magruder, one of two deputy Nixon campaign managers; Herbert L. Porter, the Nixon committee scheduling director, and G. Gordon Liddy, the former Nixon committee finance counsel who has been indicted in the Watergate bugging case.

Previously, the Nixon committee and the White House have either issued partial denials or refused to address the subject of the fund.

On Wednesday, White House Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said there has not been and is not now a "secret fund." He refused to indicate whether he was just quarreling with the word "secret."

Ziegler also refused when questioned to discuss an Aug. 26 General Accounting Office report in which the existence of the fund was cited as a possbile violation of a new campaign finance disclosure law.

The GAO, the investigative arm of Congress, said the fund contained $350,000 and was not properly reported but kept in chief fund raiser Stans' office safe. It referred the matter to the Justice Department for criminal investigation.

According to the GAO, Stans said the records of transactions involving the fund were destroyed. The GAO said that Stans and Hugh W. Sloan Jr., the former Nixon committee treasurer, were the only two people with access to the safe where the fund was kept.

In the interview for the National Public Affairs Center for Television yesterday. MacGregor denied again that H. R. Haldeman, the President's chief of staff at the White House, was one of the persons with authority to approve payments from the fund.

"At no time," MacGregor said, "has Bob had any tie whatever to the funds contributed, at any time . . . He just has had no part in any of the financial aspects of the campaign either in terms of fund raising or in terms of expenditures of funds."

The Post reported allegations on Wednesday that Haldeman was one of the persons who authorized payments from the fund. The White House has denied this, and strongly criticized the Post for printing the story, which was based on information from unnamed sources.

MacGregor said in yesterday's TV interview that whether the fund was "secret" was a matter of "semantics." He acknowledged that perhaps as much as $350,000 had been left over from the 1968 campaign and raised in 1971, and that people at the re-election committee knew of its existence.

MacGregor said the money was used for "preliminary planning" in 1971 for the primaries, and in one case, to gather information on what appeared to be organized disruption at Republican rallies in New Hampshire.

On Sept. 29 when Mitchell, Magruder and Stans were first named by The Washington Post as three of the persons authorized to approve payments from a "secret fund," the Nixon committee issued the following denial:

"There is absolutely no truth to the charges in The Post story," Powell Moore, the committee spokesman said. "Neither Mr. Mitchell nor Mr. Stans has any knowledge of any disbursement from an alleged fund as described by The Post and neither of them controlled any committee expenditures while serving as government officials."

The Post story quoted sources close to the Watergate bugging investigation as saying that Mitchell controlled disbursements from the "secret fund" while he was Attorney General.

Mitchell himself responded to the report that he was one of the several persons to control the fund:

"All that crap, you're putting it in the paper? It's all been granted . . . That's the most sickening thing I've ever heard."

In related matters, MacGregor also said yesterday that:

- The cash fund was not involved in the financing of an alleged spying and espionage campaign that federal investigators have said was basic re-election strategy conceived by high White House aides.
- He objects to the association of this alleged spying and disruption with the Watergate bugging, which he said was clearly deplorable and illegal.
- Dwight L. Chapin, the President's appointments secretary, was "not involved" with California attorney Donald H. Segretti, an alleged saboteur, though Chapin helped Segretti obtain a job in the Treasury Department. News stories in The Washington Post, The New York Times and Time magazine have linked Chapin and Segretti.